

Carter Community School

Blandford Close, Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset BH15 4BQ

Inspection dates

18–19 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal provides strong leadership and, with able support from senior and middle leaders in the school, is sustaining improvement since the last inspection.
- The ambition and high expectations shown by all school leaders, governors and the sponsor ensure there is the capacity and drive for further improvements, so all pupils at Carter Community School may 'Expect the Best'.
- School leaders and governors value the expertise, advice and challenge from the sponsor, which is helping the school improve quickly.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. They are proud of their school, respect the views of others and recognise the value of a range of opinions. All of this supports pupils' effective preparation for life in modern Britain.
- Teachers manage their classes effectively to ensure their pupils learn well. Pupils respond positively to the high-quality feedback they receive.
- Where there is any variation in pupils' achievement, school leaders accurately judge what is needed for pupils to improve and take appropriate action.
- School staff work effectively with a wide range of external services to improve the quality of education for pupils. The close partnership with a local pupil referral unit helps leaders to support any pupil who may be at risk of exclusion.
- The welfare and safety of pupils are high priorities for all staff. However, the attendance of a small number of pupils remains persistently low.
- The most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the support they receive. However, in some subjects boys do not make the same rate of progress as girls.
- Pupils' spelling, punctuation and use of grammar are not consistently accurate.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of boys so that it at least matches that of girls in all subjects.
- Maintain and further develop the emphasis on the importance of good literacy skills for all pupils, so that pupils are increasingly accurate in their use of spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Improve the attendance of pupils who struggle to attend school by making sure that recently introduced attendance initiatives support established practice and quickly reduce absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal has a clear vision to continue raising the aspirations and expectations for everybody closely associated with the school. She has developed a strong culture of ambition and success.
- School leaders, governors and the sponsor work closely together in a systematic way to support the aspirational culture and to bring about further improvements.
- School leaders have an accurate picture of how the school is doing because they check the performance of pupils and staff very regularly. Where there is any improvement to be made, they take quick, effective action.
- Leaders make effective use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up in literacy and numeracy in Year 7. Additional funding is also well used for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is targeted appropriately and regular reports show that pupils eligible for funding make good or improving progress.
- Staff appreciate the value of regular professional training to develop high-quality practice. Teachers are keen to learn from other colleagues in the United Learning group. Staff recognise the impact the school's system for developing and improving their practice has on improving outcomes for pupils.
- The breadth and balance of the curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn about new topics and concepts, including after-school activities. School leaders ensure there are equal opportunities for all pupils to access different subjects, at the same time as tailoring guidance to support the most suitable choices for individuals.
- The curriculum has a significant impact on pupil behaviour, welfare and safety. It offers a variety of activities, including weekly whole-school assemblies and tutorial sessions that teach pupils about the importance of respect and tolerance. These activities promote fundamental British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils recognise and value the leadership roles open to them in school. This is because they are encouraged to live up to the school's motto of 'Expect the Best'. School leaders encourage the development of pupils' leadership skills and provide appropriate opportunities. The school council is a significant forum for school improvements: pupils appreciate the benefits of peer mediators and 'champions', who are part of a whole-school anti-bullying strategy.

Governance of the school

- Governors are justifiably proud of all that the school achieves, but remain ambitious for further improvements. Holding senior and middle leaders to account is clearly recognised as a significant role for the governing body. Governors regularly monitor specific areas of school life, working closely with school leaders, so that plans for future success are kept on track.
- Governors value the support of the sponsor, United Learning. The governing body particularly benefits from sponsor expertise in the development and management of school policies, such as safeguarding, with well-tested strategies for implementation.

- The governing body ensures that the arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Governors access appropriate safer recruitment training and value policy updates from the sponsor.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Parents and pupils see this regard for pupil welfare as a strength of the school.
- A very strong team of key staff ensure that any safeguarding concerns about pupils are dealt with swiftly and have high priority. Partnerships with local services are effective in coordinating multi-agency approaches when needed.
- All staff and governors have regular safeguarding training. This heightens their awareness of issues such as child abuse, neglect, poor attendance, weak e-safety and the risks associated with extremist views.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the last inspection ensure that current pupils are making good progress in all years at the school. Teachers understand when to challenge pupils of all abilities and when to check that learning is secure before moving to the next stage.
- The management of classroom behaviour by staff is good, so that any low-level disruption is rare. Pupils appreciate teachers dealing quickly with any concerns. Teachers' high expectations of pupils' behaviour promote good attitudes to learning.
- Assessment is regular, accurate and consistently used by staff to help pupils understand what they can do well and what is required to make further progress. Information about previous achievement informs the planning of all staff so they can promote higher standards.
- Teaching in English and art is a strength of the school. More consistent high-quality teaching in mathematics, science, sports science, geography and French is helping current pupils to make better progress in these subjects than in recent years.
- Homework is set appropriately, in line with school policy. Pupils say they enjoy making use of materials that support their home learning, particularly those that improve their mastery in mathematics.
- All staff are aware of the need to encourage and expect high standards of literacy. However, not all teachers ensure that pupils know how to routinely improve their punctuation, grammar and spelling, including of specialist and technical terms, as well as words in common usage.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The promotion of equal opportunities and diversity of beliefs and cultures is effective. Consequently, pupils feel confident that they can voice different opinions without losing respect or feeling vulnerable. The personal development and welfare of pupils who attend alternative provision is well supported.

- Pupils take pride in their school and their own achievements. Their work is well presented around the school site and they appreciate the culture of celebrating the success of others. An older pupil, typical of many pupils inspectors spoke to, said 'We have learnt how to take more responsibility for what happens in our school.'
- Pupils say they feel safe at the school and online. They work closely with all staff to promote a strong anti-bullying culture, in and out of school. Pupils are aware of wider risks associated with extremism, keeping safe and avoiding exploitation.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by a strong team of specialist staff. Parents recognise the efforts staff make to encourage the well-being of pupils at the school and are generally very appreciative, commenting on the benefits they can see in the growing confidence of their children. One parent said of her son's experience of school, 'They put things in place to help him and give lots of support. He loves going to this school.'
- Careers advice is carefully managed. Various external guests offer a balanced range of specialist perspectives which complement the weekly programmes provided by the school's own staff. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of employment, education and training.
- Pupils are able to reflect on their actions and those of others as part of the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development the school promotes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The working atmosphere throughout the school is orderly and purposeful. Pupils take pride in their uniform, which they chose. The school site is calm and welcoming.
- Pupils understand the need for appropriate behaviour in the classroom and around the school site. They respond well to the school's conduct code and know the consequences of poor behaviour. Pupils are confident that any instances of poor conduct will be dealt with swiftly by staff and appreciate that off-task behaviour in lessons hinders effective learning.
- In the past, permanent exclusions at the school have been too high. School leaders and governors recognise this and are now reducing these through close liaison with local partners offering alternative provision. Leaders have also enhanced their own internal arrangements for breaches of conduct. As a result, pupils understand that exclusion will be used only when all other robust sanctions have been unsuccessful.
- Attendance has improved this academic year and, overall, is broadly in line with national averages. Staff rightly continue to see good attendance as a high priority for all groups of pupils and are taking effective action to improve it in most cases. However, the attendance of a small number of pupils is still too low. Initiatives to improve attendance, such as the pupil attendance panel, illustrate the school's efforts to tackle absence. However, because some of these initiatives are fairly new they are not yet having full impact.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The prior attainment of pupils on entry to the school is typically below the national average. Pupils make good progress and achieve standards of attainment at the end of key stage 4 that are in line with the national average. This is because of the good

teaching pupils receive and their positive attitudes to learning.

- In 2016, the Progress 8 score for Carter Community School was significantly above the national average and in the top 25% of schools nationally for progress.
- The progress for pupils at key stage 4 in mathematics, geography, history, French and sports science is predicted to rise significantly in 2017. This is supported by the accurate tracking of pupil progress by leaders, including middle leaders.
- The current progress of most groups of pupils throughout the school continues to improve in almost all subjects. This includes the progress of the most able pupils, and the most able disadvantaged pupils. However, boys, including disadvantaged boys, are currently not achieving as well as girls.
- Disadvantaged pupils who left the school in 2016 achieved as well as other pupils nationally in all subjects, except for mathematics.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils in the whole school is generally improving. The difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils in the school has diminished.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is currently more variable at key stage 4. However, numbers are too small to indicate trends or draw firm conclusions. School leaders' confidence that progress is improving is supported by their careful analysis of individual pupils' current work. Achievement is particularly improving where it is supported by better attendance.
- Pupils who access alternative provision typically have good outcomes because they follow a curriculum tailored to their needs.
- The number of pupils in 2016 who went on to further education, employment or training was below the national average. Reliable records point to these numbers rising in 2017 to significantly above the national average, with very few pupils not in education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	139258
Local authority	Poole
Inspection number	10024917

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	354
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Cary Wicks
Principal	Sam Davidson
Telephone number	01202 676789
Website	http://www.carter.poole.sch.uk/
Email address	enquiries@carter.poole.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 January 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Carter Community School is a small secondary school in the Borough of Poole.
- The school converted to an academy in 2013, sponsored by the United Learning Trust.
- Most pupils are White British. Proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language are below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average in most year groups.

- Prior attainment by pupils on entry to the school is significantly below the national average.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government floor standards, which set out the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at The Quay School, a pupil referral unit in Poole.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classes throughout the school and observed pupils' learning in a range of subjects, often jointly observing with school leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of pupils, listened to them read and looked at samples of their work.
- The lead inspector met two groups of pupils, some from key stage 3 and some from key stage 4.
- Inspectors visited tutorial time and a school assembly, and looked at arrangements at break and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, including those who hold responsibility for specific subjects.
- The lead inspector met with the chairman of governors, three other governors and a representative from the sponsor, United Learning.
- The lead inspector spoke to the headteacher of the local pupil referral unit, The Quay.
- There were 22 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, with 16 comments.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents. These included the school development plan, policies on the school's website and the school's own evaluation measures of success.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence on pupils' attendance and progress. They also examined safeguarding information and records relating to behaviour, attendance and welfare.

Inspection team

Chris Hummerstone, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Roger Garrett	Ofsted Inspector
Mary Hoather	Ofsted Inspector

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